

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claim will replace all prior versions and listings of claim in the present application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (canceled).

2. (currently amended) A packet communication apparatus for transmitting a packet from a first network comprising a first Virtual Private Network (VPN) to a second network comprising a plurality of VPNs, wherein the packet includes a destination Internet Protocol (IP) address, and a first VPN identifier used to compose the first VPN in the first network, said packet communication apparatus comprising:

a packet generating unit which generates a second VPN identifier used to compose one of the plurality of VPNs in the second network based on the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier; and

a transmitter which transmits a packet having added thereto said second VPN identifier,

wherein the first VPN is interconnected to the plurality of VPNs in the second network.

3. (previously presented) A packet communication apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising:

a processing unit which replaces the first VPN identifier with the second VPN identifier.

4. (previously presented) A packet communication apparatus

according to claim 2, further comprising:

a route decision processing unit which decides a route to the second network according to the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier.

5. (previously presented) A packet communication apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the packet is an IP packet.

6. (currently amended) A packet communication method of transmitting a packet from a first network comprising a first Virtual Private Network (VPN) to a second network comprising a plurality of VPNs, wherein the packet includes a destination Internet Protocol (IP) address and a first Virtual Private Network (VPN) identifier used to compose the first VPN in the first network, the packet communication method comprising the steps of:

receiving the packet; and

generating a second VPN identifier used to compose one of the plurality of VPNs in the second network based on the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier,

wherein the first VPN is interconnected to the plurality of VPNs in the second network.

7. (previously presented) A packet communication method according to claim 6, further comprising the step of:

replacing the first VPN identifier with the second VPN identifier.

8. (previously presented) A packet communication method

according to claim 6, further comprising the step of:

deciding a route to the second network according to the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier.

9. (previously presented) A packet communication apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the packet is an IP packet.

10. (currently amended) A packet communication system comprising:

a first network comprising a first Virtual Private Network (VPN);

a second network comprising:

a plurality of VPNs; and

a router which transmits a packet from the first network to the second network,

wherein the packet includes a destination Internet Protocol (IP) address and a first VPN identifier used to compose the first VPN in the first network, and

wherein the router generates a second VPN identifier used to compose one of the plurality of VPNs in the second network based on the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier,

wherein the first VPN is interconnected to the plurality of VPNs in the second network.

11. (previously presented) A packet communication system according to claim 10, wherein the router replaces the first VPN identifier with

the second VPN identifier.

12. (previously presented) A packet communication system according to claim 10, wherein the router decides a route to the second network according to the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier.

13. (currently amended) A packet communication apparatus for transmitting a packet from a first network comprising a first Virtual Private Network (VPN) to a second network comprising a plurality of VPNs, wherein the packet includes a destination Internet Protocol (IP) address and a first VPN identifier used to compose the first VPN in the first network, said packet communication apparatus comprising:

an index generating unit which generates an index based on the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier;

a packet generating unit which generates a second VPN identifier used to compose one of the plurality of VPNs in the second network based on the index; and

a transmitter which transmits a packet having added thereto said second VPN identifier,

wherein the first VPN is interconnected to the plurality of VPNs in the second network.

14. (previously presented) A packet communication apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising:

a processing unit which replaces the index with the second VPN identifier.

15. (previously presented) A packet communication apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising:

a route decision processing unit which decides a route to the second network according to the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier.

16. (previously presented) A packet communication apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the packet is an IP packet.

17. (currently amended) A packet communication method of transmitting a packet from a first network comprising a first Virtual Private Network (VPN) to a second network comprising a plurality of VPNs, wherein the packet includes a destination Internet Protocol (IP) address and a first VPN identifier used to compose the first VPN in the first network, the packet communication method comprising the steps of:

receiving the packet;

generating an index based on the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier; and

generating a second VPN identifier used to compose one of the plurality of ~~VPNs~~ VPNs in the second network based on the index,

wherein the first VPN is interconnected to the plurality of VPNs in the second network.

18. (previously presented) A packet communication method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:
replacing the index with the second VPN identifier.

19. (previously presented) A packet communication method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:
deciding a route to the second network according to the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier.

Claim 20 (canceled).

21. (currently amended) A packet communication system comprising:
a first network comprising a first Virtual Private Network (VPN);
a second network comprising:
a plurality of VPNs; and
a router which transmits a packet from the first network to the second network,
wherein the packet includes a destination Internet Protocol (IP) address and a first VPN identifier used to compose the first VPN in the first network, and
wherein the router generates an index based on the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier, and generates a second VPN identifier used to compose one of the plurality of VPNs in the second network based on the index₁

wherein the first VPN is interconnected to the plurality of VPNs in the second network.

22. (previously presented) A packet communication system according to claim 21, wherein the router replaces the index with the second VPN identifier.

23. (previously presented) A packet communication system according to claim 21, wherein the router decides a route to the second network according to the destination IP address and the first VPN identifier.